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ABSTRACT

What are the attitudinal differences in the sense of awareness between a group of students who participate in college governance and a matching sample of students who do not participate in college governance? Awareness is identified with items that express concern and emphasis upon three sets of meanings: personal, poetic, and political--self-understanding, appreciative relationship for the arts, and concern about the world and welfare of mankind, respectively. To test this hypothesis, forty students were grouped as either participants (members of the student senate) or nonparticipants in the college governance structure at York College, Pennsylvania. Both groups were administered the Awareness Scale from the College and University Environment Scales Pace (1963). Results indicated that there is no significant difference in awareness between student participants in college governance and student nonparticipants. (Author/KE)

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Title of Practicum

A Comparison of Attitudinal Differences in Awareness Between Students Participating in College Governance and Students Who do Not Participate in College Governance

CORE MODULE
College Governance

by
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A PRACTICUM PRESENTED TO NOVA UNIVERSITY
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DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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1. Title

The title of the practicum is "A Comparison of Attitudinal Differences in Awareness Between Students Participating in College Governance and Students Who do Not Participate in College Governance."

2. Statement of the Problem

The problem which this practicum addresses itself to deals with attitudinal differences in the sense of awareness between a group of students who participate in college governance and a matched sample of students who do not participate in college governance. When speaking of attitudinal differences in awareness we are referring to the term "awareness" as identified by Pace (1963). Awareness is identified with items which express a concern and emphasis upon three sets of meaning; personal, poetic and political. Self understanding, an appreciative relationship for the arts, and concern about the world and welfare of mankind respectively, represent the above stated attitudinal terms.

3. Hypothesis

The hypothesis for this research study postulates that there is no significant difference in attitudinal sense of awareness (as measured by the College and University Environment Scale) between those students participating in college governance, and a matched sample of students who do not participate in college governance.

4. Background and Significance of this Study

It would most certainly seem that the day of radically oriented students, demanding political reform on the college campus, has gone by the wayside. One might suggest several possible assumptions for this. Since the mid 60's, educational theorists have expressed the need for student participation in college governance. Today, in the decade of the 70's, even in an extremely small and conservatively oriented educational institution, we witness student participation in virtually every aspect of college governance.

York College of Pennsylvania is the setting for this study and may be epitomized by some as an extremely small and conservatively oriented institution.

As in most institutions of higher education, the Student Affairs Division of York College is involved in an ever increasing attempt to become more and more aware of the needs of the students. This, in fact, exists for several reasons. Institutional policy and philosophy dictate that the raison d'etre of such a division is to deal with every aspect of student life outside of the realm of academic affairs. In colleges throughout the nation individuals within each division, and every department, are being hard hit with questions surrounding their own accountability. In recent weeks Secretary of Education John Pittinger, of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, dictated to those colleges and universities within, or affiliated with, the Pennsylvania State

System of Higher Education to prepare a list of existing faculty and staff positions which could be eliminated within the next few years.

A prime function of the Student Affairs Division of York College is to become totally involved and responsible for student programming. Accordingly, the division is held accountable for the success or failure of its endeavor. It is highly dependent on the attitudes and perceptions of the student senate and coordinates and plans programming vis-a-vis this organization.

The importance of this study in particular is to determine if the attitudinal perceptions of this organization is or is not significantly different from those attitudinal perceptions of a matched sample of students not involved in college governance.

In the following, some thoughts and opinions evolving around the entire question of student participation in college governance are examined. Is student involvement a good thing? Should it be stifled or encouraged? Should students participate in any form of college governance? If there should be student participation, to what degree should it be allowed and/or encouraged? All of the material referred to is of tremendous importance when considering the validity of student involvement and/or participation in college governance. It would certainly seem that at York College the Student Affairs Division must not only consider the validity of the student

senate as an indicator of student opinion on the whole, but should also consider the importance of the question asked in the opening sentences of this paragraph.

As Theodore J. Marchese (1969), expressed his concern in this area in an article entitled "Student Participation in Plans is no Longer a Question of Whether, but How", we begin to examine the first in a series of opinions. Marchese expresses his opinion favorable to student participation based on a double premise. His first premise is that student involvement in planning and governance will significantly enhance his personal growth and development. His second premise is that students may very well present new ideas and broaden the perspective of educational leaders in their own institutions and systems.

It would seem that there are some very general problems with college governance which should be referred to at this time. It deals not only with student participation but community participation. This community participation can take into its realm every segment of the college community; faculty, maintenance, clerical and so on. Wilson Logan (1969), published an article in the Educational Record entitled "Changing University Governance." In this article he examines, and addresses himself to the core of the college governance problem. Logan states that Presidents usually lack the power to act singly, trustees tend to delegate the authority to govern to others, and students come and go. He further states that

the faculty probably has the most real power, but that they are usually unwilling to devote that time which administrative power demands. It is stated in this article that governance is not an end to itself but a tool to facilitate the main business of any academic community-education.

In a study conducted by the Office of Youth and Student Affairs (1973), entitled "On the Nature and Scope of Student Participation on Boards of Trustees" some interesting findings were discovered. A positive attitude in student involvement in college governance has been established for the following reasons. First, it is an institutional response to student activism. It is, at the same time, a means of profiting from new perspective and competence. The last two reasons stated were that students will gain both psychologically and educationally from these experiences, and lastly that the 26th Amendment has enfranchised student voters as an important political force.

May A. Brunson (1969), wrote an article entitled "Student Involvement in University Governance; Sense or Nonsense?" In this article the author expresses an opinion similar to that of Marchese. Understanding that students are not legally responsible for the institution, she believes that structures can be established in order to at least pool the ideas of administrators, faculty and students. Ms. Brunson also believes that governance is a learning experience and that most students learn most effectively when their responsibilities are in-

creased.

There are also some very negative responses to the question of student involvement in college governance. In the article aforementioned presented by the Office of Youth and Student Affairs (1973), entitled "On the Nature and Scope of Student Participation on Boards of Trustees" several strong points were made in opposition to student participation in college governance. One of the potential problems they point out surrounds the feeling that student participation could very well turn into ax-grinding if it is explicit. If it is generic, student voice is all that is needed. The possibility also exists that students may also use their membership as a political tool. Many students are immature and lack the expertise in the matters in which they would be dealing. A survey conducted in this study indicates that as of its date, students sit on one in eight boards and that twelve states have enacted legislation allowing for student participation and membership on boards in their state educational systems. This article also generalized an interesting philosophy regarding student participation which encompasses educational philosophy. "If education is seen as an end in itself, governance should be built around the faculty,. If education is seen as a product bought by students, the students should have a voice in how the funds are spent for their education. If education is seen as a part of society with an assigned mission,

all elements of the institution should participate; faculty, students and perhaps also workers. If education is seen as a servant of society (the most prevalent model), board members should represent societies interests....".

The AAUP Bulletin published an interesting article by T. Hoult (1969), titled "On Keeping Our Cool in the Halls of Ivy" whereby he maintains the attitude that colleges must be controlled by the most knowledgeable members of the educational community. His attitude reflects that student participation should be allowed as far as freedom of expression, both written and verbal. Students should have control over their private lives and social activities. Hoult's rationale is based on the theory that as a student, time is limited and interests are rather transitory.

Many students have presented a great deal regarding the opinion of faculty, administrators and others with reference to student participation in college governance. It does, however, seem equally important to examine student attitudes towards their own representation in college governance.

The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (1973), published a report entitled "Governance of Higher Education; Six Priority Problems." In this report some interesting findings are brought to light. The eighteen year old vote may create external pressures to resolve internal problems. However, it was found that students have no real desire to want control over academic decisions. Student opinion expressed a desire to participate more in decisions of student

discipline with a lesser emphasis on provision and course content. Student participation in areas of degree requirements, admission policies and faculty appointment and promotion were even lower on the scale.

In a study conducted by Walter J. Fallon of Fordham University (1971), entitled "Undergraduate Students Perceptions Regarding Participation in the Governance of Selected Areas at Fordham University", some interesting findings are also brought to light. Many miscellaneous but related areas were studied. Among these areas selected were aspects of curriculum, faculty and academic administrators and facilities. Fallon first concludes that students were interested in the topic of student participation in college governance since 63.9% of the 1,004 students studied, returned the questionaire. The students seemed to feel that matriculation established their right to recommend policy change to key faculty and administrative personnel through organized student channels. The majority of respondents expressed interest in participation in decision making in the following areas; commencement procedures, selection of speakers and honorary degree recipients for this occasion, evaluation of faculty, research evaluation and planning of curricula, the grading system, degree requirements, admissions policies, tuition and fees, scholarships and financial aid, and community relations. The preceding was listed in order of importance to students.

It is also important to note that the students studied perceived the ability to make significant contributions, but also recognized their qualifications for these roles in actual decision making as very limited.

Harvey D. Livix of Michigan State University (1971), conducted a study entitled "An Analysis of Student Attitudes Toward Participation in Decision Making and Governance in a Small Liberal Arts College". This study was carried out at Siena Heights College. The object was to determine student attitudes concerning participation in collegiate activities, policy making, and institutional planning and governance. In a sample of 450 students he found that students are willing to experiment, make selections and are concerned with the actions of others who feel student participation is important. Many students were reluctant to implement this meaningful participation. There is no real assurance that if students are given the opportunity to fully participate in policy making decisions, that they are willing to make the sacrifices necessary to "operationalize their convictions".

It would certainly seem that there are several different views from professional educators regarding student involvement in college governance.

In summation, it would also seem to indicate from the sources cited in this practicum that the feelings of the critics of student participation in college governance rests,

to a large degree, in the following areas: maturation level, transient views, political polarization, ax-grinding, and most definitely the limitation of available student time.

In considering all the information aforementioned, the author of this study would suggest one further consideration regarding student participation in college governance. The success of any representative democracy rests solely on the representatives of a particular constituency to adequately represent constituent points of views. These points of views, are, in the authors opinion, based on the awareness of that constituency relative to any given area of consideration, and the awareness of that representative in that same given area of consideration. In spite of how liberal an educational structure may be relative to student participation, unless the student representatives to this structure are in agreement with their constituency, the true student attitude may not be evident. The purpose of this study is to determine if the attitudinal awareness of students who participate in college governance is similar to the attitudinal awareness of students who do not participate in college governance at York College of Pennsylvania.

5. Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for the purpose of the study.

a) Awareness - As defined by Pace (1963), in relation

to the College and University Environment Scales (CUES). Concern and emphasis upon three sorts of meaning; personal, poetic, and political. Awareness of self, of society, and of esthetic stimuli.

b) College Governance - An organized system of governance whereby there is some form of shared responsibility in decision making, policy making, or at least input.

c) Control Variable - The control variables for this study are year in school, sex, residency, and status in as far as it is related to this study (participant/non participant in college governance).

d) CUES - College and University Environment Scales. Developed by Robert Pace in 1963, it is designed to measure attitudinal perception of college environment in various areas.

e) Dependant Variable - Attitudinal perception relative to awareness as measured in this study.

f) Intervening Variables - Individualistic values, sensitivity to the college environment, number of years as a participant in college governance, attitudinal differences in what college governance is and/or should be, and motivation.

6. Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study are listed below.

a) The sample was selected from a restricted population - participants in college governance - and a matched sample - 40 - students.

b) The intervening variables and basic assumptions have certainly influenced the accuracy and validity of the study.

c) The effectiveness of the scale used as a measure further effected the accuracy and validity of this study - does it measure what it purports to measure?

7. Basic Assumptions of the Study

a) It was assumed that those student participants in college governance were interested and somewhat committed to a personal and social philosophy which influenced their desire to participate in governance.

b) It was assumed that those students who did not participate in college governance may have had a personal and social philosophy different from those who did participate.

c) It is also assumed that the students studied accurately reported their responses to the questions asked on the survey.

d) A further assumption was that the number of years a student had been enrolled in college, and had, or had not participated in college governance, did not have an extremely positive, or negative effect on the results of this study.

e) It was assumed that the students participating in this study had ample experiences in the college environment to warrant their responses on the survey.

g) It was finally assumed that this study was of significant importance to warrant the time and effort expended in carrying it out.

8. Procedure Used for Collecting the Data

The following procecure was utilized for the collection of the data.

a) The study utilized two groups of students - participants in college governance, and a matched sample of non participants.

b) Those students who participated in college governance were all members of the York College of Pennsylvania Student Senate. The CUES "awareness scale" was administered to them at a regularly scheduled meeting.

c) After categorizing those participants, a matched group of non participants was selected based on year in school, sex, and residency.

d) This matched group was then administered the CUES "awareness scale".

9. Procedure for Treatment of the Data

The CUES "awareness scale" was hand scored in the traditional way as suggested by Pace (1963), where the number of correct responses generated a raw score for the purpose of computation.

a. Null Hypothesis $H_o: X_1 = X_2$

b. Alternate Hypothesis $H_a: X_1 \; X_2$

c. Level of Significance $\alpha = .05$

d. Critical -t- value ± 2.00

H_o will be rejected and H_a accepted if $t > + 2.0$ or $< - 2.0$ two tailed test .025 and .975 percentile values

10. Data Resulting from the Study

The following is the data resulting from the study.

Table I

Group I (Control)	Group II (Matched experimental)
$n_X = 20$	$n_Y = 20$
$\Sigma X = 156$	$\Sigma Y = 157$
$\Sigma X^2 = 1436$	$\Sigma Y^2 = 1433$
$\sigma = 3.39$	$\sigma = 3.24$
$\bar{X} = 7.8$	$\bar{Y} = 7.85$
$\sigma^2 = 11.49$	$\sigma^2 = 10.49$

Table II

Critical -t- Value	Calculated -t- Value
± 2.00	-.0424

Table I records the calculated statistics dealing with the control group and experimental group. It respectively records the number in the group, the sum of the scores, sum of the scores squared, standard deviation, mean and

variance.

Table 11 records the critical and calculated -t- values for the study. The null hypothesis cannot be rejected. There is no significant difference in the attitudinal sense of awareness of students involved in college governance and students who are not involved in college governance.

11. Conclusions and Significance

a) The data clearly indicates that there is no significant difference in the attitudinal sense of awareness of those students involved in college governance, and students who are not involved in college governance.

b) Implications for York College -- All implications as stated below are restricted in as far as attitudinal differences in the sense of awareness as defined for this study.

1) Those offices involved in student programming can be relatively sure that when suggestions are made by the student government, they are in line with those opinions of the student body.

2) Those members of the faculty and admimistration who seek to know what student opinion is, should first contact the elected representatives of the student body.

3) Students, or groups of students wishing to know

student opinion, or before referring to "what student opinion is" should work through the organized body of student representatives to realistically appraise student attitude.

4) If there is no significant difference in this study reflecting sense of awareness, perhaps then no significant difference exists in other areas reflecting student perception. Perhaps the Office of Student Affairs should consider further studies relating possible differences between the students involved in college governance and students who are not. It does seem important that the Office of Student Affairs should know how truly representative of student opinion and attitude the student senate is, or is not.

c) Implications for other institutions

1) It would seem that, with respect to the limitations of this study, other institutions should be aware of these findings if they are concerned with student attitudes.

2) Results of studies in this area are important knowledge of institutions with a democratic political framework which encompasses the realm of the student body.

3) For those institutions which are hesitant to involve students in their governance structure because they question the validity of student representation, the findings of such a study as carried out is essential.

d) Limitations of this study

1) The sample was selected from a restricted population - participants in college governance and a matched sample - 40 - students.

2) The intervening variables and basic assumptions have influenced the accuracy and validity of the study.

3) The effectiveness of the scale used as a measure further effects the accuracy and validity of this study

12. Residual Findings

Table I

Group I (Male Senators)	Group II (Male NonSenators)
$n_x = 13$	$n_y = 13$
$\Sigma x = 88$	$\Sigma y = 105$
$\Sigma x^2 = 746$	$\Sigma y^2 = 929$
$\sigma = 3.539$	$\sigma = 2.596$
$\bar{x} = 6.769$	$\bar{y} = 8.076$
$\sigma^2 = 12.460$	$\sigma^2 = 6.739$

Table II

Critical -t- Value	Calculated -t- Value
$t = \pm 2.064$	$t = -.929$

Table III

Group I (Female Senators)	Group II (Female NonSenators)
$n_x = 7$	$n_y = 7$
$\Sigma x = 68$	$\Sigma y = 52$
$\Sigma x^2 = 690$	$\Sigma y^2 = 504$
$\sigma = 2.214$	$\sigma = 4.429$
$\bar{x} = 9.714$	$\bar{y} = 7.428$
$\sigma^2 = 4.901$	$\sigma^2 = 19.618$

Table IV

Critical -t- Value	Calculated -t- Value
$t = \pm 2.179$	$t = 1.1731$

13. Discussion

Though the residual findings indicate that no significant differences exist between the control and experimental groups based on sex, it is however noteworthy to mention that the differences which do exist are less significant in the female sample, than in the male sample (Table IV and II respectively). There is however less of a difference in the mean scores of the male sub-groups than in the mean scores of the female sub-groups (Tables I and III respectively).

14. Further Studies

It would certainly seem important for the Student Affairs Division of York College of Pennsylvania to consider further studies in this same area. It would seem important to determine if significant differences within these same selected

groups exist in other areas of campus environment.

One, or several of the other scales as identified on the CUES, might very well be used. Consideration should also be given to administering this same research study again next year. Perhaps significant differences would exist when investigating this same topic, with more of an emphasis on the length of time a student has been involved in campus government. The aforementioned suggestions for further studies are only a few ideas of other areas which would certainly warrant investigation.

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